NEWS ANALYSIS 1-0342 MARCH 11, 1976
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LAW OF THE SEA--THE HUMAN EQUATION

ANNCR: REPRESENTATIVES OF MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED FORTY COUNTRIES ARE GATHERING IN NEW YORK FOR NEXT MONDAY'S OPENING OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE--A UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE THAT MAY PROVE CRUCIAL TO MANKIND'S FUTURE WELFARE. NEWS ANALYST FRED GALVAN LOOKS AT SOME OF THE HUMAN IMPLICATIONS UNDERLYING THE MEETING.

VOICE; AS SOME FOUR THOUSAND DELEGATES PREPARE TO MEET FOR EIGHT WEEKS IN NEW YORK, THE FISHERIES DISPUTE BETWEEN ICELAND AND BRITAIN HAS TAKEN A TURN FOR THE WORSE. BOTH COUNTRIES BLAME EACH OTHER FOR ANOTHER COLLISON BETWEEN TWO OF THEIR WARSHIPS WITHIN TWO HUNDRED MILES OF ICELAND'S COAST. THE BRITISH FRIGATE WAS THERE TO PROTECT BRITISH TRAWLERS FISHING FOR A MAJOR STAPLE OF THEIR COUNTRYMEN'S DIET. THE ICELANDIC COAST GUARD PATROL BOAT WAS THERE TO PROTECT ONE OF ICELAND'S KEY ECONOMIC RESOURCES.

IN BOSTON, A SOVIET TRAWLER IS BEING HELD BY THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD FOR HARVESTING LOBSTERS ON THE CONTINENTAL SHELF, ONE HUNDRED TWENTY MILES OFF AMERICA'S NORTHEAST COAST. THE SOVIET TRAWLER IS THE SECOND SEIZED THIS YEAR BY THE UNITED STATES. THE FIRST WAS A CUBAN VESSEL TAKEN INTO CUSTODY FOR THE SAME REASON, BUT RELEASED AFTER PAYING A FINE.

OFF CANADA'S EAST COAST, AND FARTHER SOUTH OFF THE EASTERN UNITED STATES COAST, FISHERMEN OF BOTH NATIONS ARE GRUMBLING AT THE SMALLER CATCHES THEIR SHIPS BRING IN DAILY. THEY BLAME TWO MAJOR FACTORS --OVER-FISHING BY FOREIGN TRAWLERS EQUIPPED WITH THE MOST MODERN EQUIPMENT--AND FACTORY SHIPS FOR PROCESSING THEIR CATCHES AND FLYING THE FLAGS OF THE SOVIET UNION,

POLAND, AND OTHER EAST EUOPEAN NATIONS. AND ON THE WEST COAST OF THE UNITED STATES, AMERICAN FISHERMEN USE EQUALLY PICTURESQUE LANGUAGE TO DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES OF OTHER SOVIET FISHING FACTORIES AND THOSE OF JAPAN-ACTIVITIES WHICH ARE DEPLETING FISH STOCKS IN THEIR AREA. AND AS THOSE FISH STOCKS DROP, THE PRICE OF THE PROTEIN-RICH FOOD RISES IN MARKETS NOT ONLY IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, BUT IN EUROPE, ASIA AND ELSEWHERE.

THESE ARE THE SCENARIOS AGAINST WHICH THE THIRD U.N. CONFERENCE ON THE LAW OF THE SEA WILL BE PLAYED OUT FOR THE NEXT EIGHT WEEKS. THE FISHERIES QUESTION IS ONLY ONE OF MANY COMPLEX, DIFFICULT PROBLEMS THE DELEGATES FACE IN THEIR JOB OF WRITING A COMPREHENSIVE CODE OF LAW FOR THE SEA.

IT IS THESE HUMAN DRAMAS--PERHAPS SMALL IN THEMSELVES IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT--THAT IMPART URGENCY TO THE DELIBERATIONS ABOUT TO OPEN IN NEW YORK. FOR THE AIM OF THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE IS PRECISELY DIRECTED AT KEEPING THOSE DRAMAS FROM GROWING TO PROPORTIONS THAT NO ONE WANTS. TO PUT IT IN THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF THE DIPLOMATS ARRIVING IN NEW YORK, THEIR AIM IS TO DRAFT A NEW, COMPREHENSIVE WORLD TREATY GOVERNING THE OWNERSHIP AND PRESERVATION OF THE RESOURCES OF THE SEA AND DEVISING WAYS IN WHICH THEY CAN BE EQUITABLY SHARED BY MARITIME AND NON-MARITIME NATIONS. THE NEW YORK MEETING IS THE THIRD ATTEMPT--TWO EARLIER ONES IN CARACAS AND GENEVA ACHIEVED CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS. IT IS HOPED THIS ONE WILL DO THE SAME.

SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER HAS PUT THE TASK FACING THE DELEGATES ARRIVING IN NEW YORK IN MORE DRAMATIC TERMS. AS HE TOLD DELEGATES TO THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION'S CONFERENCE

ON INTERNATIONAL LAW IN MONTREAL, "NO CURRENT INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATION IS MORE VITAL FOR THE LONG-TERM STABILITY AND PROSPERITY OF OUR GLOBE."

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